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The Influence of Religiosity, Stress and Job Attitude towards Organizational Behavior: Evidence from Public Universities in Malaysia

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate the influence of religiosity, stress, and job attitude on organizational behavior. The study was carried out in Malaysian setting which involved 320 respondents from public institutions. The respondents were selected through the utilization of the simple random sampling technique. The data was analyzed using SPSS ver.20 and descriptive and inferential statistics (multiple regression) were applied in the analysis. The findings of the study indicate that religiosity ($\beta = 0.417$, $t = 2.442$, $p = 0.022 < 0.05$) and job attitude ($\beta = 0.346$, $t = 2.010$, $p = 0.05$) were significantly influence organizational behavior. Based on the findings, suggestions and recommendation were forwarded.

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1. Introduction

Organizational behavior (OB) studies have become more significant in previous years as companies need to adapt to the speedily changing business cultures in this competitive and fast-paced civilization. In nowadays business world, managers are concentrate to how employees react to circumstances rather than if they respond. Employees start to look organizational behavior as an intricate piece of training and development of the workforce. The corporations need to expand their information about attitude and behavior of individuals, groups in organization in order to manage a new workforce and cope with the obstacles of new environment as the environment of business is always shifting. In fact, organizational behavior is an essential tool for managing effectual teams in business globe today.

With the existing cutthroat situations facing businesses, all organizations require employees that are willing and enthusiastic to work beyond their formal duties and responsibilities. Successful organizations have employees who go ahead of their formal job requirements and willing to sacrifice their time and energy to be thriving on the job tasks. It is vital to continuously explore ways of instilling OB among employees in any organizations given the importance of OB in enhancing individual, organizational as well as team performance. Crucial component of effective organizational performance denoted how eager the employees put forth effort beyond the proper responsibilities of their positions (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Generally, OB enhance performance because these behaviors allow effective ways of managing the association among employees of different work units and ultimately improve the accomplishment of the organizational or departmental final goals (Organ, 1988; Smith, Organ & Near, 1983).

Previous researches have focused in discovering factors contributing to OB with the empirical proofs that OB contribute to organizational and team effectiveness. There is still much to learn about what factors that manipulates the performance of OB (Penner, Midili & Kegelmeyer, 1997). Assessment of current literature shows scarcity of literature with regards to the relationship between religiosity, stress, job attitude and OB. Furthermore, despite of plenty studies carried out on OB, little is known about OB in the working backdrop. The restricted number of study does not allow much generalization thus assuring further investigation. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship of religiosity, stress and job attitude towards organizational behaviour of Public Institutions in Malaysia. The focus is on the factors that influence organizational behavior in an organization and lead to the success of an organization.

2. Literature Review

An organization is regarded as a social system which involves a complex set of human interactions with its surrounding peoples, in addition to their relationships with each other and to the external environment. A single organization does not stand alone, all organizations function within an external environment. All these factors mutually manipulate one another within a complicated system which ultimately grows into the lifestyles of people. While, an organizational behavior is an area of inquiry concerned with both sorts of influence: work organizations on people and people on work organizations (Brief & Weiss, 2002). Effective division of labor and coordination of activities are brought together to accomplish the goals of the organization. Divisions of labor involve the clarification on how the jobs are divided and assigned to different members whilst coordination refers to the integration of numerous activities appoint to various individuals. In short, organizations must have people and people are working towards common goals of organizations hereby it is a norm to deem both elements as inseparable working unit.

2.1 *Organizational Behavior*

Organizational behavior is an applied interdisciplinary department devoted to explore on how individuals and groups are likely to behave in an organization, including sociology, psychology, communication and management fields. Organization behavior can be applied broadly in examine the behavior of individuals in all types of organizations namely public and private organizations ultimately to improve the personal and organization

effectiveness. Organizational behavior will evolve to and beyond considering workers as people who think and feel and will more fully appreciate that the groups and organizations to which they belong also exhibit these person-like characteristics (Brief & Weiss, 2002). The study in this field has evolved as people with diverse background and cultural beliefs are obligatory to work together effectively apart from the arising of today's increasingly global and more competitive economy.

The organizations in which the individuals engage in, influencing the way they thought, felt and act, likewise, people's feelings, deliberation and actions do affect the performance of the organizational they work in. As according to Memari, Valikhani, Aghababae & Davali (2013), positive organizational behavior will effect to the organizational performances. Behavior of employees is influenced by various factors as unfair treatment received by the superior may lead to the withdrawal of employees' behavior which may be beneficial to the organization or the supervisor as avowed by Onyishi and Ogbodo (2012). Employees who received negative judgment from the supervisor prone to highly associated with pro-social behavior within an organization and vice versa. In addition, George and Bettenhausen (1990) denotes the negative group affective tone was associated with the level of pro-social behaviors in the group.

2.2 *Stress*

Stress is omnipresent and unavoidable, distracting one's physical and mental equilibrium. Beehr and Newman (1978) had expressed stress as a scenario in which it tend to force a person to deviate from normal functioning due to the disruption in one's psychological and/or physiological condition. Excessive chronic stress may have detrimental effects on health conversely acute stress may be keeping us in an active and alert stage. Stress is associated with the impairment of individual functionality in the workplace specifically the reduction of efficiency, demote the capacity to perform, dampened initiative and reduced interest in working, lacking of concern towards organization and colleagues and last but not least loss of accountability (Greenberg & Baron, 1995; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1982). Stress arises from the workplace may be the result of obligations associated with the work itself, is acknowledged as occupational stress. Occupational stress is a prototype of behavioral, emotional, physiological and cognitive reactions towards the adverse aspects of work related content, organization and environment (European Commission, 1999). Both physical and emotional well-being can be affected by occupation stress if one unable to dealt with it positively and effectively. Absenteeism, decline in productivity and incline of health care costs and illness have been linked to occupational stress.

2.2.1 *The Relationship of Stress towards Organizational Behavior*

The effectiveness of stress management in any organizations is pivotal owing to the impact of stress on employees are substance as it may negatively affect both the productivity and performance of the employees namely loss of passion on work, missing the datelines subsequently reduced the quality and quantity of work. Positive image and impression of an organization will be renowned if they appeared to be caring towards their labor force, looking after their employees concurrently assisting their employee in morality as asserted by Bickford (2005). According to Leontaridi and Ward (2002), stress may lead to some others factors other than absenteeism by means of intensifying the intention to quit of an individual from the organizations, implying the stress encounter in job is an extremely vital determinant of intention to quit. Individuals who experience stress in their current profession is more likely to grasp the intention to quit as compared to those who didn't go through stress, in other words the higher the level of stress, the probability for workers to resign will increase.

Occupational stress is a very subjective notion, affecting every individual differently at all levels up to certain extent. Therefore, occupational stress can be both positive and negative as in numerous area of organizational psychology, job dissatisfaction, workload dissatisfaction, conflict, absenteeism, degrade job performance and demote life satisfaction, in addition to turnover intentions (Siu, 2003). Stress and burnout have been associated to shortcoming work-related sequels in place of lower job performance, damaged relationships and turnover (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

2.3 *Religiosity*

It is a norm where the one of the central standpoint of an individual's is religion and faith. Stereotypically, religiosity is defined in terms of intellect on religious knowledge and beliefs; in addition to its affect which is associated with emotional attachment or feelings regarding religion. Subsequently, the behavior expressed, such as church affiliation and attendance, Bible reading, and praying (Cornwall, Albrecht, Cunningham & Pitcher, 1986). The extent in which an individual is regarded as a religious person aside from one's distinct religious beliefs and the way those beliefs are manifested is classified as religiosity (Vitell & Singhapakdi, 2008). The inclination towards religious beliefs ought to denote one's correspondence towards a set of principles which provide some extent of social controls for individuals (Rohrbaugh & Jessor, 1975). Two distinctive aspects of religiosity were proposed by Allport and Ross (1967) namely extrinsic religiosity and intrinsic religiosity. The utilitarian stimulus which brings about religious behaviors is referred as extrinsic facet, involving the use of religious for personal interest specifically in gaining popularity, attaining business targets or to establish friendship. Conversely, intrinsic dimension suggests the stimulus based upon the natural goals, leading a person to be more devout by means of abide by religious requirements such as saying prayers or engage in voluntary community services (Vitell & Singhapakdi, 2008) along with fulfilling one's religious obligation (Allport & Ross, 1967). One of the elements involved in the prediction of individuals' dissimilarity in multiplicity of attributes and behavior has been acknowledged as religiosity (Gorsuch, 1988; Lau, 1989). Additionally, students which have been found excel in academics during college ascertained personal pride, motivation, community, family, church support, religious conviction and beliefs, including religious beliefs, as factors in their success.

2.3.1 *The Relationship of Religiosity towards Organizational Behavior*

Religious will act as a medium in motivating people to work harder and perform better in the organizations. Extension from the previous study (Kutcher, Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki & Masco, 2010), revealed that religiosity not only capable of improving job attitudes simultaneously enrich individuals' behaviors such as engaging in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) more significantly. Jamal and Badawi (1993) revealed religiosity moderates the relationship between job stressors and job motivation, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Commitment in religious contributes in positive effect on performance (Logan, 2013). Religious assist one in making the right decision which guides them towards success path. Batson and Gray (1981) verified the existence of relationship between religiosity and helping others; exhibit high level of OCB, moreover the tendency to work longer as compared to those who were less pious (Snir & Harpaz, 2004). Religious does not focused mainly on attaining success nevertheless the ability to learn, respect, appreciate and value other people's religion and belief (Mattison, Jayaratne & Croxton, 2008). Ergo, having a positive belief in religious will contribute towards positive effect in relationship within the workplace.

According to a study which explored on organizational behavior (OB) among Christianity, Islam and Traditional African Religion workers, they found that religion have positive relationship towards the OB. However, Christianity appears to be more active in organizational behavior compared to Islam and Traditional African Religion (Gyekye & Haybatollahi, 2012). Shagufta and James (2013) revealed Muslim workers have positive relationship towards organization behavior (OB). Nonetheless, employee will have to balance up between their personal need and organization duties effectively if they intended to preserve the Islamic work ethic in the organization. From this study, it denotes that the Muslim employees are aware with their limitation issue where bad ethical work behavior would not be tolerated.

2.4 *Job Attitude*

The inherent feelings and beliefs in employees greatly determine how they cope and perceive the surrounding environment, obligating themselves towards the intended motion and behavior. From a mental set point of view, attitudes shape the way we look at things, hereby it is not overwhelming when the employees' attitude shaken their perception in judging their surroundings at work. Positive job attitudes exhibit among the employees are noteworthy in achieving organizations goals and objectives. As asserted by Riketta (2008), job attitude does affect

the overall performance of the workers. As a whole, the attitude of the employees specifically satisfaction and involvement are vital in attaining better performance (Velnampy, 2008). In service delivering, job attitude is the fundamental ingredient as according to Lee and Chen (2013), characteristic such as age, gender, job level, education level and job status ultimately will bring about the transformation of job attitude. It shows employees who have stayed longer in the organization prone to develop negative job attitude as compared to freshman. Nevertheless, the workers tend to develop negative attitude towards their career provided that the organization did not met their expectations.

2.4.1 The Relationship between Job Attitude and Organizational Behavior

In service quality, job attitude appear to have relationship with the behavior of the organization (Lee & Chan, 2013). The behavior of the organization and job attitude are correlated in providing best service quality, in addition, decent behavior and attitude among workers in an organization will impact the quality of the company. According to Zheng, Yang & McLean (2010) both the organization behavior and corporate social accountability were related to the work attitude; implying work attitude contributes positively on organization behavior and corporate social responsibility. Additionally, job attitude will give effect on both the intra and extra role of organizational behavior. In other words, employees who had perceive corporate social responsibility will exert positive working attitude and the willingness to provide support to their organization.

According to David, Daniel and Philip (2006), job attitudes do have positive relationship with organizational behavior. In addition, job attitude appear to be significant for the insight on work behavior. The positive job attitude exhibit among the workers is capable of leading individuals to engage in work roles more effectively. A study conducted among correspondent, uphold the positive relationship between job attitude and organizational behavior. The relationship between both variables will increase owing to the entities of attitudes and behaviors correspond closely when it comes to target and action elements (Icek & Martin, 1977) and especially comparisons are made between low and high level of correspondents.

3. Research Methodology

The proposed research method involved a survey of employees in Public University in Northern state of Malaysia. This study conducted a quantitative research by distributed questionnaires to three Public University from all level of management. Probability sampling of simple random sampling was adopted in this study as it has slightest bias and tenders the most generalizability. The questions are categorized and structured under the independent variables discussed in the literature review. Over half of the items used in this questionnaire are therefore specifically developed for this study based on literature in research journals, newspaper and article in magazine. The sample size for this study is 320 respondents. In order to achieve sample size suggested by Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001) more than 400 questionnaires were distributed and only 320 questionnaires were returned for further analysis. The research framework for this study as shown in Figure 3.1.

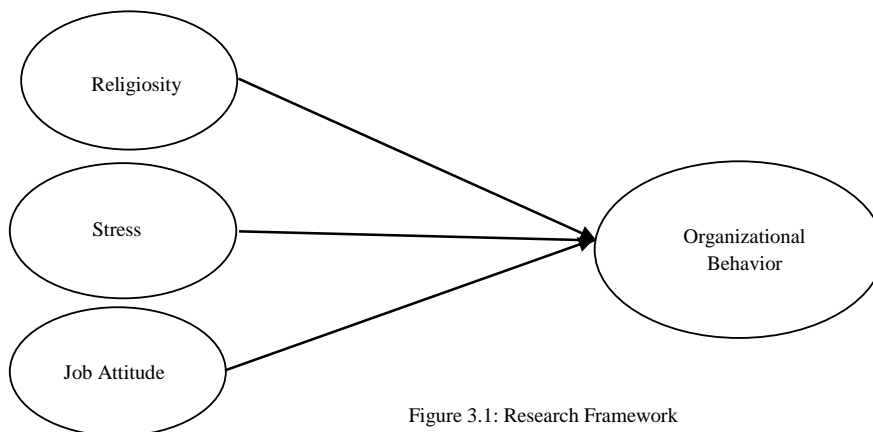


Figure 3.1: Research Framework

3.2 Hypothesis

Based from the research framework, the following hypotheses were derived:

- H1 There is a positive relationship between religiosity and organizational behavior.
- H2 The relationship between stress and organizational behavior is positive.
- H3 Positive relationship exists between job attitude and organizational behavior.

4. Analysis and findings

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The properties of the measurement scales together with the items which compose the scales can be determined via conducting reliability analysis. The relationship between the individual items in the scale is examined, indicating Cronbach's coefficient alpha values for all factors ranging between 0.6005 and 0.7794 are of good correlation inter-item consistency as shown in Table 4.1. The reliability of the measurement is obtained via testing the consistency and stability of the data collected as indicated by Sekaran (1992). This is to make certain all the dedicated items in each of the variable are compliant with providing consistent results. Sekaran (2000) stated internal consistency with alpha coefficient of above 0.80 is ranked as good while within the range of 0.70 is considered as acceptable.

Table 4.1: Reliability Test using Cronbach's Alpha

| Variables | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Religiosity | 5 | 0.752 |
| Stress | 2 | 0.628 |
| Job Attitude | 5 | 0.647 |
| Organizational Behavior | 5 | 0.736 |

4.2 Descriptive Test

As shown from Table 4.2.1, the means for all the items are between 2 points and 3 points above. This illustrated that majority of the respondents are devoted on the study variables especially on religious practices and organizational behavior. The minimum of 2 implied minorities of the respondents are less enthusiastic especially on stress and job attitude. Maximum of 4 points suggested respondents have strong belief in study variables. The result of this study showed that the highest mean is “*Religion offers me most is the comfort in times of trouble and sorrow*” with mean equivalent to 3.4 and a standard deviation of 0.56. The items for Stress score a lowest means of 2.333 and the standard deviation of 0.54667; *How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?*

Table 4.2.1: Summary of Descriptive Test

| Items | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Dev |
|--|------|------|--------|----------|
| Religiosity | | | | |
| I try hard to carry my religion over into all my other dealings in life. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.2000 | 0.40684 |
| It is important for me to spend time in private thought and prayer | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.3000 | 0.53498 |
| I try hard to live all my life according to my religious beliefs. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.2333 | 0.56832 |
| Religion offers me most is the comfort in times of trouble and sorrow. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.4000 | 0.56324 |
| My religion is important because it answers many questions about the meaning of life. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.3000 | 0.46609 |
| Stress | | | | |
| How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life? | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.3333 | 0.54667 |
| How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems? | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.6000 | 0.67466 |
| Job Attitude | | | | |
| I obey corporation's rules, regulations and procedures. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.2000 | 0.40684 |
| I conserve and protect company's property. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.3000 | 0.46609 |
| I do not take extra breaks | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.7667 | 0.56832 |
| I attend functions that are not required, but help to boost the firm's image. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.9667 | 0.31984 |
| I give advance notice when I fail to attend any occasions. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.1667 | 0.37905 |
| Organizational behavior | | | | |
| I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around me at work. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.2667 | 0.44978 |
| I help others who have heavy workloads. | 3.00 | 4.00 | 3.2000 | 0.40684 |
| I assist others with work-related problems. | 1.00 | 4.00 | 3.0333 | 0.66868 |
| I assist new comer even though it is not required. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.2333 | 0.50401 |
| I take time to listen to others problems and worries. | 2.00 | 4.00 | 3.1333 | 0.50742 |

The descriptive test was performed among the interval-scaled for both independent and dependent variables. The results indicates majority of the respondents selection are very close to the mean on all variables owing to the standard deviation for all the variables are not large figures. The highest means score is Religiosity (3.2867) and the lowest means score is Stress (2.4667). The summary of descriptive test for studied variables as shown on Table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2: Summary of Descriptive Test for Study Variables

| Variables | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----------------------|------|------|--------|----------------|
| Religiosity | 2.60 | 4.00 | 3.2867 | 0.36268 |
| Stress | 2.00 | 4.00 | 2.4667 | 0.52413 |
| Job Attitude | 2.60 | 3.80 | 3.0800 | 0.28089 |
| Organization Behavior | 2.80 | 4.00 | 3.1733 | 0.35905 |

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficient involve the measurement of linear associations and on how variables are related, Table 4.3 shows the bivariate correlations between the dependent variable and predictors namely job attitude, stress, and religiosity of this study. The correlation analysis as shown in Table 4.3, the Sig. (2-tailed) value for stress variable is 0.581 which is much greater than 0.05 level of significance implying there is no significant correlation relationship found between the stress and organizational behavior. The correlation coefficient, r is 0.105 signify there is weak positive association relationship between the two variables. The closer a Pearson's r value to 1 the stronger the relationship between the two variable, thus with positive correlation coefficient, r of 0.601 denotes both the religiosity and organizational behavior have a relatively strong relationship, in addition, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is less than 0.05 proves that there is indeed significant correlations between the two variables. The positive Pearson's r value for job attitude and organizational behavior is 0.569 depicts there is reasonably strong relationship between both the variables. There is a statistically significant correlation between the two variables as this can be shown via the Sig. (2-tailed) value which is less than 0.05, implying the increase or decrease in either one of the variable will bring about the increase or decrease of the other variable.

Table 4.3: Summary Result of Correlations Analysis

| Variables | Coefficient | Organizational Behavior |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Religiosity | Pearson Correlation | .601** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 5 |
| Stress | Pearson Correlation | .105 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .581 |
| | N | 2 |
| Job Attitude | Pearson Correlation | .569** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 |
| | N | 5 |

Note: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed)

4.4 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis assesses both the degree and the characteristic of relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. The regression coefficients express the relative magnitude for each of the independent variable in the extrapolation of dependent variable. R symbolize the multiple correlation coefficient, denoting the relationship strength for a given multiple independent variable related to the dependent variable. The closer the R^2 to 1, signifying the regression model fits the data better as most of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the model. The R^2 value for three independent variables as shown on Table 4.4, embedded in the regression model is 0.451, suggesting almost 45 percent of the variance in organizational behavior is explained by variance of independent variables.

Table 4.4.1: Multiple Regression Analysis

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .671 ^a | .451 | .387 | .28110 |

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Attitude, Stress, and Religiosity

Dependent variable: Organizational Behavior

Table 4.4.2 indicates the standardized coefficients as β disclosed the outcome of each independent variable on the dependent variable in standard deviations, comparing the degree of magnitude among the three independent variables. As seen from the Table 4.4.2, according to the regression analysis computed, religiosity has significance correlation (Sig t = 0.022) towards organizational behavior. Religiosity (β = 0.417, t = 2.442, $p < 0.05$) was found significance and shown positive association towards organizational behavior. This supported a finding by Seth and Haybatollahi (2012) that religious have a positive relationship towards organizational behavior. Additionally, Shagufta and James (2013) also revealed that Muslim employees have positive relationship towards organization behavior. Among the independent variables, religiosity is the most noteworthy elements in determining the organizational behavior with the highest standard deviations of 0.417. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between the religiosity and organizational behavior at the significance level of p-value less than 0.05.

The regression analysis indicates that stress has insignificant relationship (Sig t = 0.846) towards organization behavior. Stress variable (β = 0.029, t = 0.196, $p > 0.05$) suggest there is extremely irrelevance positive association towards organizational behavior. According to Siu (2003), occupational stress is a very subjective notion, affecting every individual differently at all levels up to certain extent. Thus, occupational stress can be both positive and negative as in numerous area of organizational psychology, job dissatisfaction, workload dissatisfaction, conflict, absenteeism, degrade job performance and demote life satisfaction, in addition to turnover intentions. Furthermore, stress has limited effect on organizational behavior as the β value or the standard deviation at 0.029 only. Therefore, insignificance relationship between stress and organizational behavior exists at the significance level of p-value larger than 0.05.

The regression analysis shows that job attitude has significance positive relationship (Sig t = 0.055) towards organizational behavior. Job attitude (β = 0.346, t = 2.010, $p < 0.05$) was found substantial and positively related towards organizational behavior. This in tandem with finding by Lee and Chen (2013), that job attitude appear to have significance relationship with the behavior of the organization in service quality. The organization behavior and corporate social accountability were found related to the work attitude; implying work attitude contributes positively on organization behavior and corporate social responsibility (Zheng, 2010). Furthermore, David, Daniel and Philip (2006) avowed, job attitudes do have positive relationship with organizational behavior. Job attitude seems to be second determinants of organization behavior after religiosity with β value of 0.346. Therefore, there is

a significance positive relationship between job attitude and organizational behavior at significance level of p-value less than 0.05.

Table 4.4.2: Summary Result of Regression Analysis

| Model | Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | Organizational Behavior | .405 | .633 | | .641 | .527 |
| | Religiosity | .413 | .169 | .417 | 2.442 | .022 |
| | Stress | .020 | .101 | .029 | .196 | .846 |
| | Job Attitude | .442 | .220 | .346 | 2.010 | .055 |

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings, it vividly illustrates that from the Pearson Correlation and Regression, there is no significant correlation and significant relationship found between the stress and organizational behavior. However, both the religiosity and job attitude with organizational behavior have a relatively strong and significant relationship. Based on regression analysis, it reveals that there is positive and significant relationship between religiosity and job attitude with organizational behavior and these two hypotheses (H1 and H3) is accepted. Conversely, there is positive yet insignificant relationship between stress and organizational behavior and H2 is rejected further investigation need to be executed.

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